

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 1, 4, 6-9 and 13-16 are currently being amended. No new matter is being added.

This amendment changes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-16 are now pending in this application.

Allowable subject matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 9-16 are allowable and that claim 6 contains allowable subject matter.

Objection to disclosure

The disclosure was objected to for informalities. The specification has been amended to include section headings as appropriate thus overcoming the objection.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Claims 4-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,084,816 to Boese ("Boese"). Claims 1-3 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boese in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,898,667 to Longfield ("Longfield"). Claim 7 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boese in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,731,649 to Silverman ("Silverman"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 recites “listening to point code status messages originating from distant point codes forwarded on said link, wherein the point codes are identified by point code numbers, and wherein an alignment request is issued on said link for a given combination of MTP Level 1 parameter values, and if no response is received on said link, automatically changing the combination of parameter values and reissuing a further alignment request until a message originating from a distant point code is received.” Boese, by contrast, merely discloses that when a node is fully operational and ready to be brought into service, the link connecting the node to the remainder of the network undergoes alignment by an LSSU message with values toggling between “out of alignment” and “out of service” (col. 18, lines 12). The status values of “out of alignment” and “out of service” (as well as those of “processor failure” and “signaling link out of service” in col. 18, lines 53-54), however, are not MTP Level 1 parameter values, but instead would be considered to be MTP Level 3 status values. Thus, Boese does not suggest all the features of independent claim 1, and claim 1 is patentable thereover for at least this reason.

Longfield and Silverman were cited for other features of the claims, and fail to cure the deficiencies of Boese.

Independent claim 4 recites “issuing a MTP Level 2 alignment request on said link for a given combination of said MTP Level 1 parameter values, when no response is received on said link, changing said combination of parameter values, and repeating said step of issuing an alignment request; and when a response is received on said link, setting said parameter values according to the parameter values of said combination”, and thus is patentable for reasons analogous to claim 1.

The dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as their respective independent claims, as well as for further patentable features recited therein.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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HEWLETT-PACKARD COMPANY
Customer No.: 022879

By William T. Ellis

William T. Ellis
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 26,874

Thomas G. Bilodeau
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 43,438